

critical digest

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This Week

Wake Up Darling-Barry-
more 5/2. Pollock-Segall-
Cook production of new Alex
Gottlieb comedy with Barry
Nelson, Kay Medford, Barbara
Britton, Russell Nype, Direct-
ed by Ezra Stone.

The Most Happy Fella-
Imperial 5/3. Bloomgarden-
Loesser production of Frank
Loesser's musical version of
"They Knew What They Want-
ed." With Robert Weede and
Jo Sullivan.

The Witchfinders-Provin-
cetown 5/4. Alan Saunders
staged and produced new play
by Louis O. Cox.

Next Week

A Doll's House-Green-
wich Mews 5/7... Iceman Com-
eth-Circle 5/8... Kiss Me
Kate-City Center 5/10... The
Lovers-Beck 5/10.

Interview Hi-Lite

Earle Hyman, title player
of Mr. Johnson, would like to
play Othello once a year in a
college away from Broadway
yearly for the next 10 years,
he told Dudar, Post. Then he
believes he might be old eno-
ugh and physically big enough
to do a good Broadway produc-
tion of classic.

Digests of Current NYC Theatre Reviews

Goodbye Again- Hayes 4/24-4/26. Revival of
1932 comedy by Allan Scott and George Haight closed
after 4 performances. Shepard Traube and JH Del
Bonio were the producers and cast featured Donald
Cook, Hiram Sherman and Polly Rowles. Show did re-
ceive 3 very, very mild "pro notices" from Chapman,
News, Hawkins, World Telegram & Sun, and Watts,
Post. All found humor in plot and playing, but admitted
script was badly dated. Con side headed by Atkinson,
Times, who feared the attitude toward middle class
stupidity that seemed delightfully iconoclastic
in 1932 has the unhappy effect today of making the au-
dience more sophisticated than the play. In spite of
some script updating, Coleman, Mirror, feared that
the crow's feet are still showing. McClain, Journal
American, agreed with majority who complimented
cast for worthwhile try, and wished they would appear
in a new, fresh comedy.

Eastward in Eden-Actors Playhouse. Revival
of Dorothy Gardner's play of Emily Dickinson, added
one pro and one con review to its critical file. Herr-
idge, Post, billed it as a production worth seeing, in-
spite of uneven cast. While Geor, Variety, feared
play is talky, stilted and static.

Hits Revisited

Diary of Anne Frank is astonishing on how the
performance quality has held up, approved Hobe,
Variety. The entire cast is still giving glowing per-
formances to the beautiful play. The play itself
may be the reason, critic guessed, as it can hardly
help being both humbling and challenging. It retains
a superb edge after 6 months of playing.

Great Gatsby

A musical version of F. Scott Fitzgerald's The
Great Gatsby will be presented by Yale Dramat
May 3, 4, 5 and June 8, 9 at New Haven.

MGM will directly finance NY legit productions and will give other aids to new playwrights. The first affiliation will be with Gilbert Miller's importation of The Reluctant Debutante from London. Sidney Phillips will head the new project of the film company. While TV and record concerns have backed recent shows, this is the first direct backing of a NY show by a film concern.

Plays

Mister Johnson, Goodbye Again and Affair of Honor close this week... A new scene has been added to The Great Sebastians... A 3 man House Judiciary Committee named to check complaints that the Shubert interests were using intimidating practices against a Boston paper because of unfavorable theatre reviews... The Vamp lost \$354,264... The Sleeping Prince due at Helen Hayes Theatre in October with Barbara Bel Geddes and Michael Redgrave... Fred Coe to produce The Five Dollar Bill on Broadway.

Players

Paul Muni to take 2 month vacation from Inherit the Wind starting July 1... Lawrence Tibbett will replace Ezio Pinza in Fanny starting June 2... Harold Clurman will direct Immaculate Adventure... Claiborne Foster replaced Mildred Dunnoek, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof... Judith Parrish subbed for Claudette Colbert, Janus, for several performances, latter had virus... Ward Morehouse, former drama critic, signed as "advisory publicist" on Inherit the Wind pending his application to ATPAM, press agent's union... Henry Stephenson, age 85, died.

Other Broadways

James Holden picked to star in road company of No Time for Sergeants due in Chicago Sept 13... Moscow Art Theatre production of Anna Karenina may be presented in NY next season by S. Hurok... 3 Berlin theatres have asked for rights to Diary of Anne Frank.

Award File

Alan Schneider won Guggenheim Fund fellowship to study history and significance of the open stage in the 20th century theatre of Western Europe and US... Frances Sternhagen, Admirable Bashville, and Gerald Hiken, Uncle Vanya, won Clarence Derwent Awards for best supporting performances in non-featured roles... Julie Harris won 16th annual Barter Theatre Award.

Summer Playhouses

Gertrude Berg will tour summer houses in Solid Gold Cadillac... Earle Hyman will play in King John at Stratford, Conn, Hiram Sherman will play in Measure for Measure... Beatrice Lillie will tour summer houses again with her "Evening with Beatrice Lillie"... Show Boat opening June 21 at Jones Beach is scheduled for one week only.

TV & Radio Notes

ANTA considering TV film series planned by Jack Skirball, Gold Seal Productions... Happy Birthday set for June 26 NBC TV Producers Showcase... Orson Welles preparing hour long TV film series on Volpone... Next season CBS TV Ford will present Bandwagon and Green Pastures.

Theatre Record Notes

Columbia Records signed to record original cast album of The Most Happy Fella... RCA to record Shangri-La.

Theatre Film Notes

The Desk Set to be filmed by 20th Century Fox... Can-Can production at 20th CenturyFox may star Danny Kaye... Witness for the Prosecution to be filmed by Hornblow-Small, with Billy Wilder directing.

Theatre Book Notes

"Maude Adams" by Phyllis Robbins published by G. P. Putnam... "The Great Sebastians" published by Random House.



GREEN

ROOM

DEPARTMENT

GODOT GUESSES... Samuel Beckett and his universe are schizoid, suspects Lerner, Post. Waiting for Godot characters Didi and Gogo are the ego and the id, columnist explains...Nathan, Journal American, panned play as the little play that wasn't there...Watts, Post, admits play may be difficult, but it has a sheer theatrical fascination. It combines gloomy and disillusioned parable of the human condition with so much unorthodox theatrical effectiveness that you sit there forming your own conception of its meaning and therefore emphasizing your wry enjoyment of a haunting comedy-vaudeville show.

MACARTHUR OBIT... Charles MacArthur was a lovable imp who retained boyish impulses to the end, comments Sobol, Journal American. He engendered excitement and was ruled by excitement. Those who knew him found him a loyal, always understanding friend and the bereaved Helen Hayes will testify that he was a devoted husband.

DRAMA MAIL BOX... 70,000 idiots should see Waiting for Godot, noted a partial Times reader...As the chances for bars are dim, why aren't theatre patrons given a choice of soda drinks, asks a C. D. subscriber.

CRITICAL THOUGHTS... Slapping a critic is as normal a reaction as twitching the leg and it's a wonder it doesn't happen all the time, notes Chapman, News...Watts, Post, hopes Jan Clayton's success in King and I will keep her in the popular musical theatre, where she belongs...Winchell guesses that Waiting for Godot is the explanation of Skin of Our Teeth.

LADY DANCES OKAYED... Hanya Holm should get some sort of specially designed gold medal for the work she has done in My Fair Lady, praises dance critic Martin, Times. Dance and stage direction are perfectly fused in a remarkable wedding of theatrical taste. Miss Holm has caught the flavor of character in her movement and the sense of place with rare skill.

COLUMN TIPS... 90% of legit actors work as waiters or in stores because their stage income averages \$20 a week, reports Winchell...Roxy Theatre may be torn down for a real estate project in 3 years, hears Walker.



PROS & CONS by T. M. K.

Waiting for Godot is given a thoughtful, beautiful production. There are as many ways to stage the difficult script as there are ways to fathom it. The current version, played for humor, is filled with inspired acting. Though no one has to agree with the author's dim view of life, every theatre goer must admit that his point of view is expressed in an unusual and interesting manner. Also let it be added that the audience(on 2nd night) was moved to excitement and applause many times.

Summer theatre plans are just about finished and the season is just about to start. Aside from the fact that they give employment to large numbers of theatre workers and do offer low budget tryouts to some new plays, summer theatre operators seldom promote and/or produce new ideas in the theatre. Perhaps some of the spirit of adventure of the new crop of Off Broadway producers will be caught by a few of the younger strawhat managers.



OFF BROADWAY

First Theatre Matinee planned by Lucille Lortel at Theatre de Lys will be held May 15. A concert reading of Cry The Beloved Country will feature Earle Hyman, Clayton Corbin, Rosetta Le Noir, and Mary Morris, who staged the bill. Series under supervision of Miss Lortel for Greater NY Chapter of ANTA.

Contemporary Theatre plans to alternate Hubo's Les Miserables with The Lower Depths... Phoenix plans a stock company of 12 for next season... Off Broadway shows that closed include Cradle Song, Beautiful People, Private Life of Master Race... Richard Abbott, Conrad Bain, Richard Bowler, Peter Falk, Joe Marr, Larry Robinson added to Iceman Cometh at Circle... Al Ramsen, Dolores Sutton, Vincent Gardenia added to Man With Golden Arm at Cherry Lane... The Witchfinders opens May 4 at Provincetown... The Ivory Branch opens May 21 at Provincetown... Bram Nossen will sub for Clarence Derwent week of May 6 in Uncle Vanya, latter to do film... Jack Orrison replaced Robert Blossom in A Doll's House at Greenwich Mews.

The Man of Destiny, added to bill of repertory at Downtown Theatre, E 4th St, drew a pair of split notices. Gelb, Times, found the Shaw play, well worth the trip downtown. Qualities of good spirits and good taste compensate for those of polish and high style. But Kerner, Women's Wear thought only one of the actors had proper approach. Chekhov's monologue "On the Harmfulness of Tobacco" is the curtain raiser of program present Tuesday to Thursday, Candida is presented Friday to Sunday.



THEATRE BOOK COMMENTS

"Wingless Victory" by Frances Winwar (Harpers) may well be the best dual biography to appear in English. It covers the lives of Eleanora Duse and Gabriele d'Annunzio. Down, Variety, recommended tome as a true treasure in the theatre's storehouse.

TV THEATRE COMMENTS



Dodsworth presented on NBC TV Producers Showcase with Frederic March and Claire Trevor was highly praised by Gould, Times, as 90 minutes of adult drama beautifully and faithfully produced. For the lucky view with color sets, critic added, the tinted version added to the rewards.



OUT OF TOWN

Can-Can is in Baltimore, Shangri-La moved from New Haven to Boston, Chicago playing Bad Seed, Inherit the Wind, The Lovers, and Teahouse of August Moon... The Boy Friend in Cincinnati, Damn Yankees in Cleveland, Pajama Game in Detroit... Philadelphia host to Ziegfeld Follies, Pittsburgh viewing Plain and Fancy.

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